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GEOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE REPORT

PROBABLE UNITED STATES AND USSR GEODETIC
ACCURACIES BETWEEN ICBM LAUNCH
SITES AND TARGETS



CIA/RR-GR-166

November 1957

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Introduction 1

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Introduction

In planning launch sites for intercontinental ballistic missiles in either the US or the USSR, it is evident that the launch sites of one nation will be prime targets of the other in case of open hostilities. The facilities of a launch site may be "soft," that is, spread out on the surface of the earth; or they may be "hard," that is, built underground to minimize surface exposure and vulnerability. The vulnerability of any launch site depends upon its degree of hardness and upon the enemy's capability for hitting the selected target, which is usually expressed as circular probable error (CEP).

It is important to distinguish between the purely operational errors (random) of the missile and the geodetic errors (systematic) which are inherent in connecting the launch and target points on the earth's surface.

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